REALITY ASPECTS OF BLINDESS AS THEY AFFECT CASE WORK

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AN ANALYSIS OF THE PROBLEMS AND ADJUSTMENT IN THE CASES OF TEN BLIND CLIENTS OF THE COUNTY RELIEF BUREAU OF CLEVELAND, OHIO, WITH SPECIAL REFERENCE TO UNDERSTANDING THE PART PLAYED BY THE DISABILITY ITSELF AND THE IMPLICATIONS FOR CASE WORK TREATMENT.

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INTRODUCTION

Purpose, Sources and Method

The purpose of this inquiry was to make an analysis of the problems and adjustment in the cases of ten blind clients of the County Relief Bureau[1] of Cleveland, Ohio, with special reference to understanding the part played by the disability itself, and the implications for case work treatment.

The CRB, the agency to whom these cases were known, is a public agency with responsibility for financial assistance to the needy blind of Cleveland as one of its many services. The workers of this agency are responsible for the case work with the blind clients who receive assistance. The case records of the blind clients transferred to the writer had revealed difficulties in case work treatment which seemed to be due to a considerable degree to a lack of understanding of the practical problems related to the handicap, and, therefore, of how best to help these clients work out a satisfactory adjustment to their environment.

This inquiry dealt with ten of the fourteen blind clients in the writer's case load. Four were excluded because they were suffering from a major illness in addition to the handicap: one had tuberculosis, one showed signs of physical and mental deterioration due to lues, the third suffered from arthritis in his arms and legs, and the fourth,

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[1] The County Relief Bureau will be referred to as CRB in the future.

mentally deficient, had high blood pressure. These ten clients were blind according to the legal definition of that disability. The study was a case analysis with the aid of a schedule.[2] The sources of data were the records of these ten clients with whom the writer had had a case work relationship. The writer has supplemented the information in the records with further interviews with these clients, discussions with former workers and information in other agency records, whenever indicated and available.

The information in the records was limited because these clients had had largely untrained workers who had not had the opportunity to orient themselves to the significance of the material growing out of their relationship with the clients. Besides, the information that existed had not been gathered for research purposes. The writer, in addition, has not had any experience in research. There was moreover, an inescapable subjective element in this inquiry, for the writer has a disability similar to that of the clients, and the immediate identification of these clients with the writer may have brought out feelings which the writer did not consciously seek. Just as any case worker has to be wary of bringing to bear his own feelings and the meaning to him of his own experience upon the problems and the experience of the clients, so the writer in his case work relationship has had continually to be on guard not to read into the

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[2] See Appendix for copy of the Schedule.

client's feelings what might be his own reactions to similar situations. Even with precaution, however, such influences may have some bearing on the findings of this research.

The situation out of which this study grew was the writer's experience, derived from his own endeavor to handle his own disability, and his work with many blind clients. This experience and observation had led him to note that there was a lack of adequate understanding of the disability itself in relation to the emotions of the persons involved and the social environment. It was the writer's belief that to succeed with these blind clients the worker must develop this understanding in addition to knowledge and skills in generic case work.

In the field of work with the blind, there are two dominant trends: one is the development of and instruction in particular skills, without adequate evaluation of the individual and social factors. The other is the emphasis on understanding the emotions of the client with the use of case work techniques in order to help the client mobilize his energies to move forward with insufficient regard for the practical aspects of handling the disability itself.

Significance of Blindness as a Handicap

Before entering on a discussion of the case material, some general discussion seems indicated as to the effects of the disability upon the total personality taking into account both internal and external pressure. Blindness

as a disability produces definite effects. However, as in all human problems, there are variables: the degree of lack of vision, the time of onset of the disability, the degree of intelligence, the nature of the social environment, and the kind of emotional and social adjustment the blind person has made before he became blind. Blindness produces similar effects upon all who are afflicted. The differences are in degree due to the above stated variables.

Sight is the master sense. Upon it man depends for most of his conscious experience. For example, dreams are mostly pictorial in nature. The eye automatically focuses and selects. It can grasp details of form, size and color, and the relation of objects to each other. It is three-dimensional. It can be closed voluntarily and involuntarily as a protective measure. Vision supplies constant contact with the environment. Through varying colors, forms, designs and shapes that continually reflect upon the conscious and unconscious, the person who sees feels he is a part of the immediate environment. A person who sees also has a great measure of control over his environment; with slight effort he can select the person or object with whom he wishes to come in contact or to avoid. The person who is totally blind feels himself to be in a vacuum. He cannot continually feel everything, even those things that may be within his reach. His sense of touch cannot go beyond the length of his arm. He cannot feel moving objects nor can he feel large objects like buildings. Everything cannot be

heard, for what sound does a chandelier, a table, a chair, a beautiful painting or a silent person make? The reactions toward this detached feeling vary among blind people: one will constantly talk or chatter to bridge the gulf; another will withdraw into his fantasy; a third, being more aware of the gap, will struggle, stuttering and hesitating in his speech.

A person who is blind has to depend upon his ear for contact with his environment. This sense of perception is far more restricted than the eye, for it is not selective; it cannot focus upon a single sound among many, excluding the others; it cannot detect details of size, form or color; it has no concept of length, width or depth; it cannot be closed voluntarily, nor can it protect itself from loud noises or shocks by involuntary control.

The ear depends upon an active thinking process to interpret what the sounds are that it is registering upon the brain, while the eye can take a quick glance over the situation. Hearing is as active a process of the mind as multiplying 16 times 16, for example. In hearing there is a noticeable lapse of time for this interpretation to take place. This often makes a blind person appear dull, hard of hearing or inattentive. People who see aid their hearing by sight. When what they hear is indistinct they supply meaning by the facial expression, or the movement of the speaker's lips. To the blind, another person exists only as long as he speaks or can be touched. For this reason

hearing without sight is an inefficient sense for keeping contact with people. As soon as a person stops talking the blind person falls into isolation, for he knows people exist only as long as they talk. He is always in a state of doubt as to when people come or go, or whether they are listening to him. Since the ear has no automatic selective mechanism, as the eye, a blind person finds himself in a state of confusion when a group of people are all talking at once. He can never be sure when a comment is being directed toward him unless he is singled out by name or is tapped on the arm or shoulder. He often finds himself interrupting someone who is trying to speak in a group discussion. Therefore, a feeling of uncertainty and insecurity results. This obviously increases nervous tension and a greater expenditure of nervous energy is required for a blind person to mingle socially in order to avoid as much as possible becoming conspicuous, awkward or obstructive.

A blind person depends upon his hearing to a very great extent in getting from one place to another. When he travels alone, either with a cane or a guide dog, he has to depend upon his sense of hearing in order to keep himself oriented. The sounds he relies upon for guidance are those of footsteps, passing cars, streetcars or buses, a machine in a shoe repair shop, or a coffee grinder in a grocery store. These sounds are, however, frequently distorted and confused when the sunshine is unusually hot, as in midsummer, when the atmosphere is extra humid and hot, or when the

weather is stormy or rainy. A blind person can hear when he is approaching an obstacle such as a tree or pole, or wall, provided it is at the height of his face. However, he has to come rather close to it in order to hear it. Consequently there is a constant expectancy of colliding with something while walking. This fear increases nervous tension and fatigue.

The sense of touch upon which a blind person must also rely is a highly overrated sensory organ. It is subject to sudden changes of temperature: if it is too warm the fingers become moist; if it is too cold the fingers become numb; and so the sense of touch is interfered with. Dust, callouses, and the lack of sensitivity all have their adverse effect.

The olfactory sense, although not as important or put to as much use as the sense of hearing and touch, is nevertheless employed by the blind person, for he depends on it to discover what food he is eating or what store he is in or near--a fish market certainly smells different from a perfume counter in a drugstore! The satisfactions that could be derived from the sense of smell are limited in the city because of the noxious fumes that are prevalent.

The conscious and the unconscious are both deprived of an abundance of stimulation from the outside world by the lack of sight even if the other sensory organs are highly developed. To those who because of their high degree of intelligence yearn for stimulating experience, blindness

is a much greater frustration than to those of a much lower level of intelligence. Yet, to all the lack of vision is a source of frustration. There is no automatic compensation for the loss of sight. In fact, experience is teaching that the loss of sight results in the loss of some of the usefulness of the other senses. The reason for this is that the other senses are continually receiving assistance from the eyes.

However, through persistent, devoted, untiring attention a person deprived of his eye sight can put the other senses to more use. Through hearing, a blind person can learn to evaluate personality. Through much experience he can learn to identify the tone of voice that goes with the mood or emotional response of a person. Through changes in pitch, rhythm, and quality of tone he can note the various moods corresponding to the gamut of the emotions. How well he is able to associate the various aspects of the human voice with the emotions will depend upon the degree of his intelligence, intuition, and experience in contacts with people. A blind man can identify the birds by their calls. He can recognize trees by the sound of the breeze through the leaves. He can enjoy a symphony by the Cleveland orchestra or the swing and sway of Sammy Kay.

Likewise, the sense of touch can be developed. There is a great realm of tactual experience: he can feel roughness, smoothness, degrees of heat and cold, softness and hardness, dryness and wetness, sharpness, flatness and

fineness, heaviness and lightness; all kinds of angles and curves; vibrations and pulsations; and indications of life such as body warmth and movement. He can by the shake of a hand or a touch on the arm feel human emotion.

A blind person can, in addition, feel with the balls of his feet, cracks, holes, edges of steps and sidewalks, the kind of material upon which he is walking such as asphalt, gravel, dirt or grass. He can feel the bark of trees, the structure of leaves and the petals of flowers. He can tell through his sense of touch a shepherd dog from a scotty, but he could not tell one shepherd dog from another. The sense of touch cannot distinguish minute details which are the distinguishing characteristics.

A blind person can further derive much satisfaction from the fragrance of flowers, fresh fruit and perfumes.

It would seem, therefore, that those who want to be really useful to the blind person need to understand that to live is not only to see, but also to hear, to feel with the fingers as well as with the emotions, to sense, to shape, to manipulate, to converse, to think, to walk, to smell and taste. To people who see, the most conscious part of living is what they see. To people who are blind, the most conscious part of living for them is the contacts they make through hearing. It is hard to help a blind person feel essentially useful and worthy unless we are convinced and fully cognizant of the ways of living fully without sight. It is the conviction of and the faith in what is left of a man bereft

of his sight that is a spiritual stimulant to the growth of his personality.

PRESENTATION OF FINDINGS

Description of the Group as a Whole

The ten clients the writer has chosen to study were diversified as to age, sex, race, age of onset of blindness, education, occupation, and social status.

Of these ten clients the youngest was twenty and the oldest was fifty-seven. Six were thirty-five years old and under. Seven were men and three women. Eight were white and two colored, and one of the colored had a white father and a Negro mother. The onset of blindness occurred at different ages: one was born blind; five became blind as small children; and the other four were adults when they lost their vision.

They had achieved varying educational levels: one graduated from college; three completed high school; two had some high school work but did not graduate; and four had a grammar school education. Five received a major part of their education at a residential school for the blind.

Their occupations were as follows: one a clerk, typist, and dictaphone operator; one a trap drummer; one a plumber and electrician; one a vending machine distributor; one a street musician; one a laundry worker; and one a laborer. One was trained to cane chairs, and the other two had no skills of any kind. None of those who became blind as adults changed their occupation after the onset of the disability with the exception of one who changed from work

as laborer to that of a street musician.

Their social status was as follows: four were married and living with their partners, and three of these had children; one was divorced and lived with her small child; one lived with her sister; one lived with his mother; and three had been living with their landladies over a long period from five to twenty years.

These ten clients presented a variety of problems. All ten of them revealed feelings of rejection because of early deprivation such as the loss of a parent in their childhood. This early deprivation may have had some bearing on their current feelings in the areas which concerned them most. Mr. Luckman[1] expressed his feeling of lack of social acceptance by refusing to work in a sheltered workshop, and continuing an unacceptable way of earning a living as a street musician. Freedom of getting from place to place had special significance for Mr. Houghton all his life; therefore, he felt the public's lack of acceptance largely in that area. He felt people were suspicious that he was not really blind because he could get around alone. Mrs. Rotan refused to mingle with strangers who could see, even though she was invited. She also keenly desired an apartment of her own, but felt that landlords would not rent to her because she was blind. Mrs. Allison had anxiety and guilt about her child, and felt that people considered her unable

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[1] All names used in this thesis are fictitious.

to take care of her child adequately because she had limited vision. Mr. Waters felt that no employer would give him a job because of his blindness. Miss Edington was irritated with her sister because her sister did not want her to cook a meal or clean the house; this restriction meant to Miss Edington lack of full acceptance on the part of her sister. Mr. Ewing refused to take part in the activities of the Society for the Blind[2] because he felt it involved a loss of social and cultural status to be classed as a blind person. Mr. Lezar found it difficult to attract the attention of women, and held his disability accountable for his lack of success. Mr. Barron felt he needed a sighted person to intercede in his behalf to get work as a musician. Mr. Lebon stated that his brothers and sisters felt he did not need as much to live on as they did because he was blind.

Four expressed fear of giving up a particular line of endeavor, even one which had proved financially unprofitable because they felt more at ease and secure in the performance of their customary pursuits. It seemed to be the one anchor of security for them in a sea of insecurities in other areas. Because of the disability the area of the unknown had been greatly increased for them. The extent of the control of the immediate environment possessed by a person with sight is lost by a person with this disability to the degree of his loss of vision. Mr. Barron, for example, was

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[2] The Society for the Blind will hereafter be referred to as CBS.

taught at a residential school for the blind to be a trap drummer, and even though there was no market for such work in the community for a blind man, still he persisted in it, insisting that work as a musician was the only line of endeavor he cared to pursue. Mr. Ewing could not be helped to begin his own rehabilitation until he was given an opportunity to prove his skill as a typist. He had felt most secure in this kind of work, as he had earned a grade of 98 on a civil service examination in typing before he had lost his sight. Mr. Houghton refused to give up the vending machine business for a job in private industry even though it had been proved that his endeavors with vending machines were not profitable, because he felt secure in his knowledge and skill in that business. Mr. Luckman for a long time refused to give up playing the accordion in the streets, because that was the one thing he felt most competent to do.

Three clients repeatedly expressed the need to have someone who understood their needs to provide leadership and to intercede in their behalf in getting what they wanted for themselves. All three, Mr. Ewing, Mr. Barron, and Mr. Lezar, felt the need of help in finding employment. Two others, Mrs. Rotan and Mrs. Allison, showed appreciation when the worker sensed this need but they did not like to ask for help. Mrs. Allison accepted with great appreciation help in getting to school with her five year old daughter and also the offer of financial assistance. Mrs. Rotan appreciated help in obtaining convalescent care for herself.

All ten were receiving public assistance. Two of these have recently become self supporting through employment in private industry. The other eight were still either entirely or partially supported by public assistance. Three were housekeepers and not employed outside the home. Two were employed in their own businesses. One had just completed high school, and one was working in a sheltered workshop. One was completely unoccupied because he could not accept his limited employability.

Two found it difficult to accept their dependency in areas where sight is necessary and expressed their fear of dependency through their assertions of over-independence. Mrs. Allison could not admit her limited vision and, therefore, asserted her independence through refusing to do things that were essential for her well being, and that of her child. Mr. Waters was reluctant to accept help in finding employment, for before he lost his vision he had always been able to find employment for himself. This problem did not arise with the others.

Four had suffered to some extent through overprotection from other people. Mr. Lebon could not learn to travel by himself, since his mother would insist upon taking him everywhere for fear he would get hurt. Mr. Waters' wife and children refused to encourage him to accept employment for fear that he might get hurt, as they would have felt responsible. Mr. Barron and Mr. Ewing were held back from traveling alone by their landladies who seemed to have taken

the place of their mothers.

Three expressed a definite fear of being identified as a blind person. Mr. Ewing refused to go to CBS, even for recreational purposes. He stated that he would not find companionship of his cultural and social level. He had no basis for this fear, since he had no actual knowledge of who frequented the CBS. Mrs. Allison refused to move to a certain federal housing estate because other blind people lived there.

Nine out of the ten expressed negative feelings from mere fear to outright hatred toward CBS, because they felt that the director and workers there interfered with their independence in varying degrees. The extent of their contacts have been varied from one interview to years of regular and irregular contacts. Mr. Barron feared the agency would force him to do work he was not interested in doing. Mr. Ewing feared loss of social status because in his opinion he would have to do work there beneath his cultural and social level. Mr. Waters and Mr. Houghton accused the agency of preventing them from finding their own jobs in private industry. Mrs. Rotan accused the agency of interfering with her relations with men and wanting to take her baby away from her. She resented the fact that the agency seemed to disapprove of marriage between blind people, and their right to have children though married. Mr. Luckman hated the agency for meddling in his personal affairs in sending his demented sister back to an institution. He blamed the agency

for his not getting adequate training in playing the accordion. He also charged that the CBS was not giving sufficient remuneration to the blind workers in their sheltered workshops. Mrs. Allison expressed extreme hatred of the agency without giving specific incidents. This was probably related to her whole pattern of dread of being identified as a blind person. Mr. Lebon had a vague negative feeling toward the agency. He had also expressed resentment toward the over-protectiveness of the residential school for the blind and of his mother. This resentment toward over-protectiveness may account for his negative feelings toward the agency. Mr. Lezar resented the agency for not providing opportunities for social activities. Miss Edington was the only one of the ten who seemed completely to accept the agency, which seemed to be able to provide the recreational and social opportunities she desired.

All ten revealed feelings of not being fully understood or accepted. This feeling has usually been expressed in connection with what they believed people thought they could or could not do as a result of their handicap. As has been pointed out, difficulties arose in different areas and to a different extent with each individual.

None of the ten clients had all nine of the problems mentioned above. One had seven problems; two had six; three had five; three had four; and one had three. The two problems common to all ten were the feelings of early deprivation which may have influenced their feelings about their current

situations, and financial need. Next in frequency was the negative attitude toward the CBS shared by nine out of the ten. Next came the need to have someone intercede to help them get what they wanted, a feeling shared by five of the clients. Four expressed the fear of giving up the line of endeavor they had been following even for a more profitable one because change meant loss of security and self confidence. Four suffered from over-protection from other people. Three complained of lack of opportunities for contact with the opposite sex. Only two feared accepting dependency in the areas where sight was necessary. And two feared being identified as a blind person.

These ten clients fall into three major groups. The first group is composed of three clients who were unable emotionally to accept their disability. The second group is composed of four clients who emotionally accepted their disability, but needed help in making a practical adjustment to the difficulties arising from it. The third group consists of three clients who accepted their blindness but needed special help in using community resources to enable them to use whatever skill they had.

Group I

Mrs. Allison represents the group of three clients who could not emotionally accept their disability. Mrs. Allison was unable to orient herself easily in a new

environment and was not able to admit that this difficulty was due to her lack of vision. Mr. Waters was fearful of accepting employment because it meant he would have to get accustomed to a new environment in which he would not know the exact location of things. He realized this fact intellectually; however, he could not accept it emotionally and shied away from trying to meet new situations, or when he did come face to face with them, he would give all kinds of reasons why he could not deal with them. The underlying difficulty was that he could not face the fact that as a blind man he would have to depend upon others for certain kinds of help that he did not need when he could see. For example, when repairing plumbing, as a blind man, he would need someone by his side to show him, at least at first, where the various connections were in a building, while as a sighted person, he was able to find them by himself. He was not able to accept this kind of help and consequently it has been difficult to help him to secure employment. Mrs. Rotan had given birth to a baby, and it was difficult for her to accept the fact that she would need help in caring for the baby. She became defiant when it was suggested that because she was blind she would need such help.

Mrs. A. was chosen for detailed presentation rather than the others because there was more historical material as a basis for analysis, and also because the record indicated more clearly the case work methods used in dealing with a person who cannot emotionally accept the disability.

When the writer first knew her she had just been accepted by the agency for service. She was 28 years old and had a child of five. She had been divorced about two years. Her husband was blind from hereditary causes. Mrs. A. became blind at the age of five and the cause of her blindness was unknown. Whenever Mrs. A. worked, she was employed as a laundress.

There was constant friction between her father and her mother when Mrs. A. was a child. As a result of this family strife, Mrs. A. was in continual emotional turmoil. When the public school authorities recommended that Mrs. A. be sent to a sight conservation class, Mrs. Wills, her mother, at first refused to accept the fact that her child had inadequate vision, and insisted upon keeping her with the seeing children. About a semester elapsed before the school authorities finally persuaded Mrs. W. to enroll her daughter in a sight conservation class. Mrs. A. had remained in this sight conservation class for a number of years when the eye physician recommended that she go into a Braille class. Again Mrs. W. balked and Mrs. A. also strenuously resisted the suggestion. Even though she was not able to make adequate use of the experience in the sight conservation class because of her defective vision, yet both she and her mother persisted in having her continue there. Finally, however, after another semester the school authorities persuaded both mother and daughter that Mrs. A. would be better off in a class for the blind.[1]

Mrs. A. at that time had enough vision to play with the sighted children. She could see enough to roller skate, run, climb fences, and ride a bicycle, but she was not able to see enough to read print. She stated that she felt uncomfortable about this situation for her playmates could not

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[1] In the public school system of Cleveland there are special classes for visually handicapped children: one type is for those who can read books with enlarged print, and another for those who cannot read print at all, and the children are therefore taught to read Braille. All the visually handicapped children attend the regular classes with the sighted children, but return to the sight-saving or Braille class for special help.

understand her attending a class for the blind when she was able to take part in their rough-and-tumble games. She simply hated to bring home a Braille book. It meant that somehow she was different from other children.

The strife in her home continued during her entire stay there. Her mother who had been a school teacher constantly criticized her father for his bad grammar even though she knew he had to earn a living for himself from the age of fourteen. Mrs. W. was hard of hearing and was constantly suspicious that Mr. W. and the children were saying things behind her back. Mrs. W. constantly preached to Mrs. A. about chastity. She would never let her bring boys into the home. On the other hand, she never gave her information about menstruation or sex in general.

During Mrs. A.'s adolescence conditions at home worsened. Mrs. W. began to seek a divorce. She had Mr. W. taken before the mayor who denounced him because of his abuse of her. The school authorities considered the home so inadequate they recommended foster care for Mrs. A., and she was placed in a foster home at the age of fourteen. However, in spite of all the strife and turmoil at home, she longed to return to her parents. She tried visiting them on weekends, but always returned to the foster mother in a state of hysterics. Because of her spending so much of her early education in a sight conservation class where she had not learned as much as she might have for a girl of the same age and the same degree of intelligence, due to the fact that she was not able to see well enough to see even the enlarged print, she was retarded from an educational point of view. She consequently felt inferior in competition with the other students. As a result in the eleventh grade at the age of nineteen she quit school.

She then returned to her own home where she lived for the next four years. During this time she worked as a laundress. She had two older brothers who left home without finishing school because of the strife there. At the age of twenty-two, after having known Mr. Ray Allison about six weeks, she married him just to get away from home. Her mother

> accused her of being pregnant when she married, which Mrs. A. vigorously denied. A baby with defective vision was born at the end of a year. Two years later she divorced Mr. A. She has recently been able to accept the blame for her difficulty with Mr. A.

Ever since Mrs. A. became blind at the age of five there was a lack of acceptance on both her and her mother's part of the fact of her limited vision. Throughout her experience there was a fear of being identified as a blind person. There was also a definite hostility toward anyone who intimated that she was not able to do a particular thing because she was not able to see well enough. Throughout her life she never faced her disability squarely. Whenever a problem with regard to it arose, she would deny the problem rather than admit its cause. For example, rather than admit that she could not see the print in the sight conservation class, she would prefer to appear dull or uninterested in the work. If she had to go some place and did not know how to get there, she would rationalize that there was no point in going rather than ask someone to take her.

During the writer's relationship with her she disclosed her emotional involvement in regard to her disability in various ways. She expressed the fear that neighbors did not consider her to be a good mother and able to take adequate care of her child, because she could not see. She would almost rather go hungry than ask for assistance, because it would make her appear dependent upon those who could see. When anyone did not consult her in every detail about her

daughter at the school, for example, she would interpret this as a lack of respect for her as an adult. She believed that people felt that because she could not see well she could not be considered a fully responsible person. Because she saw others only rather vaguely, she often feared that strangers were staring at her. When she moved to a new address, she refused to send her child to school, because, as she stated, since she had not gone to kindergarten it was not necessary for Jean to go. The real reason was that she did not know how to take the child to school, and would not admit that she could not see her way there. This admission would have been necessary if she had asked for help.

Mrs. A. expressed her fear of overprotection when the writer first met her. She stated that she wanted help only until she could find work again. If the writer expected her to show any appreciation for assistance, he could just keep it. She would have nothing to do with the private agency for the blind, for contact with that agency meant to her that she was not able to get along on her own. Mrs. A. revealed her own defiance of her disability when she forced her five year old daughter to race with her up and down a hill. In obedience to her mother's commands they both ran, and Mrs. A. fell stumbling over a raised pavement block. Mrs. A. then punished Jean for not having prevented this accident. She stated that she would not have punished her daughter so severely if a bystander had not observed the mishap.

Mrs. A. indicated to the writer in the first interview her lack of acceptance of her disability through her refusal to move to a housing estate where other blind people lived, and through her refusal to accept employment service through the CBS because she did not want to have anything to do with other blind people. She also indicated that she did not accept her blindness, as she emphasized the fact that she kept a cleaner house than her neighbors even though she could not see.

The writer understood that this lack of acceptance of her disability was closely related to emotional problems from other causes. However, since she did not recognize her need for help in accepting her disability, the writer at first endeavored to help in those areas in which she had indicated a need and a readiness to accept assistance. For example, when she found herself in financial need, she was able to ask for help, which the writer gave according to the policy of the agency. Then the writer was able to help her in the areas where she could not admit her need for help. He offered to escort her to the new school with the little girl. He could have taken her there by car, but he knew she could not orient herself unless she could feel her way with her feet, and see the varying sizes of shadows of objects she could discern with her limited vision. On foot she could feel the direction, the width of streets, the number of blocks, the approximate length of blocks, and the various crooks and turns. She accepted this offer, and as

a result the child started to school.

The writer accompanied Mrs. A. to the Board of Education to discuss with the visiting teacher Jean's progress in school. At the end of the conference the teacher offered to drive Mrs. A. home. During this conference Mrs. A. had expressed a great deal of hostility against the teacher, and therefore, already felt guilty and unworthy. In this offer of help the teacher was threatening her with feelings of dependency and inadequacy. The writer, sensing this state of affairs, advised the teacher to let Mrs. A. go home alone.

Mrs. A. was not able to work because she had to care for her child, for whom day care was not available at the time. She did not have adequate financial resources to meet her budgetary requirements, so the CRB made up the deficit. The worker constantly had to assure her that the agency existed for her benefit as long as she met the eligibility requirements and that no one in the agency expected thanks from her.

The writer believed that if he had discussed with her beforehand the fact that she would not take her child to school because she could not see to get there, and did not like to admit her disability, she would have denied it and become defiant. However, she was ready to accept his offer of help because he recognized not only that she needed this help, but also that she was not emotionally ready to admit it and talk about it. Because of her inability to admit

that she needed to depend upon someone in areas where sight was an advantage, he made certain that she understood that he was ready to help only when she really found it was too difficult to carry through for herself. For example, when she was planning to move he let her feel free to carry through her own arrangements, but also informed her that the agency would be ready to help her if she ran into any serious difficulty. On this basis she was able to ask for help in moving.

While the writer was able to help her in various ways through recognizing her inability emotionally to accept her handicap, he was aware that she had deep seated emotional problems due to her early relationships with her parents and later with her husband, which complicated her adjustment to her handicap and to life in general. Because the writer showed understanding through his ability to help her in concrete ways when she indicated a need and a readiness to accept help, Mrs. A. was able to relate to him, and to respond to his questions and comments about the fact that many of the difficulties in her feelings might be due to the kind of experiences she had as a child and in her marriage. After talking things out over a period of many months she was able to express her conflicts and hostile feelings, and gradually to recognize that many of her difficulties were due to her feelings about her early childhood experiences. As a result of this treatment she was able to accept psychiatric service for herself. At the time

of this study psychiatric treatment had not actually been started, but the date of the first appointment had been set. Further case work treatment with Mrs. A. will depend upon the recommendations of the psychiatrist and her response to him.

Group II

Mr. Barron represents the group of four clients who had emotionally accepted the disability but who needed help in obviating some of the difficulties resulting from it. Mr. Barron, Mr. Houghton, and Mr. Lebon needed help in accepting the use of a cane in traveling alone. Mr. Barron needed help in using a cane because he had a simple fear of traveling by himself. Mr. Houghton had to be helped to use a white can instead of an ordinary one because of the additional safety it provided, for in Cleveland a blind man can stop traffic with a white cane and cross the streets even against traffic signals. Mr. Lebon had to be helped to free himself from his mother's fear of letting him travel alone with a cane. Miss Edington sought help in another area, in cooking. For example, she was concerned in knowing how to tell when a cake was done. She was told that if she stuck a toothpick into it and pulled it out dry, she would then know the cake was done.

Mr. B. was chosen because his case demonstrates more clearly than the others the differences between two

case work approaches: one without the special knowledge of dealing with the practical aspects of blindness and the other with this special knowledge. The approach without this knowledge led to frustration on the part of the client and worker and ever increasing animosity on the part of the client. With this knowledge, it led to the liberating of the client's energies and to his acceptance of the community resources that became available.

> Mr. B., a colored man, was 28 years old and single at the time of the study. His mother died when he was seven years old and his father remarried. Mr. B. lived first with one relative and then with another. He spent all his school years at a residential school for the blind. He was always in a position of being protected and cared for, first with relatives who over-protected him, then in the sheltered environment of the institution, and with relatives again following his graduation. Even his landlady in Cleveland was the aunt of a school friend.
>
> He had been totally blind from birth. At the residential school for the blind he was trained to be a trap drummer. He came to Cleveland in 1941 from a nearby town in Ohio with the hope of getting more work as a musician, but securing such work was not so easy. Finding himself in financial need he began receiving public assistance, Aid to the Blind, which is administered in Cleveland by the CHB. He had never been entirely self supporting, although he had earned some money as a musician.
>
> In the first interview Mr. B. stated his problem as one of finding employment as trap drummer in this community, but he believed he would have to have someone help him. The worker said that she believed there were no opportunities for blind musicians in Cleveland, and consequently tried to direct him into other channels.

She inquired how he planned to earn money in Cleveland and he replied that he had heard that it was a pretty good place for musicians. He then said that his uncle was a trap drummer, that his father played the piano and the drums, and his brother played the trumpet in the army band. He added that he had been here a long time, but had not found "the right person." When asked what he meant, he said that he had not found anyone with "pull" in the music field until lately when he met Phil Sand, an acquaintance who had been trying to get him a job in some theatre. Mr. B. said that he supposed it would be in some small showhouse, but he did not care where he worked, so long as he worked in music. That was all he liked to do, he added. Further inquiry brought out that he had also been trained to do typing at the school for the blind. He completed the course in the school and received a diploma for it, but he did not like to do it. The worker explained that inasmuch as he had come to this county from another one on the assumption that he would be employed in music, it would be only reasonable for the agency to give him some time to make connections in this field, but that it was the worker's personal experience, having been in music for many years in this city, that Cleveland was not always a good market for musicians, because there have been times when musicians have been out of work for long periods.

Then she discussed with him the possibility of turning to typing as a second choice. He resisted this at quite some length, and the worker explained that she would not make any further plans or ask his relatives for any assistance for a few weeks. If, however, he did not find any remunerative returns in the musical field she would have to talk with him then about the possibility of going further with typing.

In reply to a query about Braille, he said that he could read it and write it but he did not like it, and added again, "Music is the only thing I want to do in this life."

The worker recorded that many of his remarks seemed to carry a lot of emotion with them and

> that she thought that she had gone as far in the first interview as was advisable, but yet she continued by asking him whether he heard from his relatives. He answered that he heard from them occasionally. Upon further questioning he said that his father was living all alone and that he had two sisters in one town and one sister and one brother in another town in Ohio. Before she left, when she mentioned her interest in music, Mr. B. immediately swung around sideways and tried to pull up his chair toward her a few inches. The worker said that that was the first time he showed any interest in her visit. He wanted to know what the worker had done, and she told him a little bit about it. As she was leaving, Mr. B. expressed the hope that she would return soon.

Mr. B. stated in the beginning that his problem was, as he saw it, one of finding employment as a trap drummer. He revealed the difficulty of finding work and his need of having "the right person" help him. He immediately made it clear that his only interest as a means of earning a livelihood was through his music. Not only had he been trained as a trap drummer at the residential school for the blind, but the other men in his family, his father, his brother and an uncle with whom he had lived, were all musicians. He indicated a modest evaluation of his ability as a musician by his willingness to work any place as long as he could play the drums.

The worker told him that through her experience she knew that Cleveland was not a good place for a musician to earn a living, as there had been times when musicians had been out of work for long periods. She injected an element of reality about the field of music as a likely

means of lasting employment. Yet there is question whether this was a reality factor on his level of musicianship as it may have been on hers, for she was a classical musician and he a jazz band player. However, when she indicated to him her own interest in music, she found that he became interested in her. This common interest in music helped to establish rapport. She probably could have furthered this positive relationship by bringing out more of the reality aspects: by inquiring how he learned new pieces of music, whether he used Braille notations, also how he managed to get from place to place on jobs. She could also have inquired about some of the difficulties of playing at night clubs where, for example, patrons often requested selections that were not in his memorized repertoire.

Instead of concluding in advance that there were no opportunities for him as a musician in this community, she could have offered her assistance in exploring the resources for his employment as a trap drummer so that he could come to his own decision about the realities of this situation. Instead of doing this, however, she decided upon exploring other ways of his becoming employable. She inquired what other skills he had learned at the school for the blind. When he replied that he could type, she assumed that this was a better occupation for him. However, he refused to consider it as a means of earning a livelihood. She then proposed the teaching of Braille, but he demurred, as he had no interest in it whatever.

In response to his resistance to typing and the teaching of Braille, the worker stated that the agency would give him a reasonable length of time to find out what he could do before insisting that he accept employment as a typist, or before she would seek help from his relatives. After he expressed a stony resistance to typing and teaching Braille a second time, she inquired about his relatives and their whereabouts. While the record did not state his emotional response to this inquiry, it might be assumed that the mention of getting in touch with relatives immediately following his resistance to her suggestions may have aroused his anxiety further with regard to his fear of dependency upon his family.

It seemed to the writer that the client was left with the feeling that he was being threatened rather than helped into a new endeavor. He may have felt that he was being rejected here in having the worker insist that he abandon his chosen career which he loved and for which he had had special training, for one in which he was not the least interested and not well trained. She may have added to the anxiety he felt in relation to being dependent through her suggestion that she might have to seek help for him from his family. He wanted to be dependent in the area of finding employment, for through such help he could eventually become independent. While he felt inadequate in the seeking of employment, he felt adequate in the playing of drums. He could, therefore, accept help in finding work as a musician.

He could thus balance his feeling of inadequacy in one area with the feeling of self confidence in another.

In the second interview the worker insisted on pressing her plans of having Mr. B. accept typing or the teaching of Braille instead of playing drums, even though they were not based on Mr. B.'s desires for himself, or even on the environmental realities. She repeated her statement of the same plans in this interview more positively than before. In response Mr. B. became more hostile toward her. He conceded a little to her pressure in telling her to go ahead and try to find employment for him as a typist. In connection with the teaching of Braille she suggested that he might do this as a humanitarian enterprise, but he could not accept the teaching of Braille even on this basis. She implied that he was somewhat of a malingerer, since he was young and apparently well, and yet unwilling to accept the kind of employment she recommended for him. Although he brought up the reality of the difficulty of traveling alone, she ignored, or was not aware of the importance of this. She also seemed not to realize that he as a blind person had a fear of changing his kind of work from one in which he had had special training and satisfying experience to one in which he did have sufficient skill to communicate with the sighted world, but not sufficient to earn a living. Although he smiled and seemed acquiescent to her suggestion, the worker at the close of the interview realized that he was internally resistant to her plans.

In preparation for the next contact with Mr. B. the worker called upon Mr. Henry, the placement manager of CBS, who told her that he did not think there were any opportunities for employment in Cleveland as yet for a person with the double handicap of blindness and color.

In the interview which followed, the worker persisted in her efforts to get Mr. B. to see the situation her way, although she had been told by Mr. Henry, the man who knew most about the employment situation for the blind in this community, that at that time there was hardly any likelihood that Mr. B. would find any employment. She told Mr. B. that a reasonable time for adjustment was allowed. In her eagerness to get him to work at the occupation she chose for him she forgot that there was no such thing as "a reasonable time" to make an adjustment when clients are dealt with as individuals. Verbally, at least, she recognized his inability to get around in the city, but she allowed her frustration with regard to his unwillingness to accept her suggestions for employment to blind her. In her discussion with him about typing he told her he could not get around the city, and she missed this opportunity to discuss this matter with him. Yet his need for getting around with a guide, guide dog or with a cane, had to be considered before any kind of employment plan could be worked out. In this interview she again told him he had to consider employment, even though it was not what he wanted. He yielded verbally, but did not seem really to accept her

plan. She had not as yet attempted to give him any real help in working out his plan.

The worker later learned from Mr. Henry that there was a job available stringing tags at CBS paying $11.00 a week. Mr. Henry expressed disgust and annoyance and accused Mr. B. of being lazy and determined not to work, since Mr. B. had turned this job down.[1]

Although Mr. B. had been resisting all along working as a typist, the worker told him in the next interview that she expected him to come down to the CBS office for a test. She did not discuss with him whether he would care to go for the test or whether he would be able to get someone to bring him to the office. Not until two days later did she explore with the chief stenographer the possibility of such a test, and when she did, she was met with resistance by the stenographer. She then hastened to telephone the chief of special services of the U. S. Employment Service, and he also discouraged the idea, for he believed there would be no opportunities for a colored man in that field.

In talking with Mr. B. the worker queried him about the names and addresses of places where he had had jobs as a trap drummer. She was incredulous at the fact that he did not know. She apparently did not know that a blind person when he depends upon a sighted person to guide

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[1] The stringing of tags is an operation of putting a string or thin wire through a hole in a tag such as a price tag, and tying a certain kind of knot. The pay was fifty cents a thousand, and the average pay for this work was about $1.00 a day.

him frequently relaxes his alertness and often actually does not know where he is being taken. This fact, as well as his lack of trust and confidence in her, may explain why he could not tell her where he had been working.

In response to a question as to whether he realized the aid he was receiving was relief money, he replied with surprise that he did not know this. It should not have been surprising that Mr. B. considered his grant a pension, since the blind in Ohio did receive a pension prior to the passage of the Federal Social Security Act. Many of the blind believe they should receive a pension to redress the balance of the inequality between themselves and the sighted people in the economic struggle. Public assistance as a "pension" may be a source of security for a blind person who is beset by all the human uncertainties that are aggravated by blindness. Here we see the worker threatening to remove one of his main sources of security by pointing out to him that he probably did not need a blind grant without offering him any substitute. She made no effort to interpret the constructive side of the agency policy of administering relief by explaining the budgetary plan as established for a working man. She did not explain that an increased allowance could be made for food, clothing, carfare and guide service. These additional sums are included in the budget according to policy, even though the man may be employed only on a part time basis. Through her use of the flexibility of the policies of the agency with regard to the financial planning,

she could have demonstrated to Mr. B. that she understood his struggles to find employment in his chosen field, and could also have indicated her interest in him as a total personality.

The worker had arranged with the director of U.S.E.S. for a typing test for Mr. B. and had offered to take Mr. B. down in her car. It turned out that she could not take him, and she advised him that since school was out he might be able to get a school girl or boy to take him. Mr. B. telephoned the director and learned that he could not promise him any work even if he did take the test. Therefore, since Mr. B. could not get any assurance about a job, he made no effort to get to U.S.E.S. It is doubtful with his pattern of inability to admit his need to depend upon someone else to take him places whether he could have arranged for his own guide. The worker should have accepted his need for dependency in this area and arranged a guide for him.

In the next interview the worker insisted that Mr. B. go to U.S.E.S. even though the director had held out little hope that he might ever be employed as a typist. In the discussion of the music jobs Mr. B. said he guessed he would have to look around for some other kind of work as he had not been able to find sufficient work as a drummer. He thus indicated that he had begun to realize that the worker had some basis for her statement that there were very few opportunities to earn a living in music. The worker, in turn, recognized that Mr. B. would probably continue to need

assistance. Mr. B. could, however, have been given more security if the worker had explained the agency policies of budgeting for a man who had limited employability. Here again arose the problem of traveling, and again it was not fully recognized as a problem by the worker.

Two interviews later the worker brought up for the first time the matter of using a white cane. He asked questions which she could not answer about its usefulness. For example, she could have given him security if she had known that in Cleveland, for instance, there is a city ordinance that all traffic must stop if a blind person raises the white cane to signal that he is about to cross the street. She could have further increased his security if she had known how a cane could detect an object a few inches in front of him. Instead, she aroused his fears by mentioning to him that a white cane was a warning to children who might be approaching him from behind on a bicycle.

Following this interview the worker again got in touch with U.S.E.S. and was told that there were no opportunities for typists who could not do other jobs around an office. She also learned at CBS that there was a shortage of work there and, therefore, no opportunity for Mr. B., a new worker.

She then concluded, according to the record, "that Mr. B. had the happy faculty of agreement with suggestions, but most agreements were a form of negativism." She stated that Mr. B. was extremely dependent, and recommended a plan

of treatment of reducing relief, thus encouraging Mr. B. consistently to meet his own needs. She further stated that some firm authority, coupled with careful planning, might be quite a relief and release to him.

The worker described him as an extremely dependent person, yet she never spoke of poor personal appearance. Therefore, he apparently dressed himself neatly. He had lived in about five different homes where he had to learn to get around. He had never been put out of any of those homes because he broke furniture, or was dirty about his person or his surroundings. He had to travel around the grounds and buildings of the state school for the blind alone without anyone helping him for sixteen years. He had learned to type and to read and write Braille. He could and did communicate by telephone and he had been able to get to the dance jobs. The only area in which he was conspicuously dependent was in the one of getting around in a large city alone.

The worker then wrote a letter to the State School for the Blind. Among many other things she stated that Mr. B. did not relate himself in any way to any suggestion that would help him develop psychological or economic independence, and that she was at a loss to know what kind of treatment to offer in the face of what seemed to be marked dependency. The worker asked for social history, medical information, psychometric tests and vocational guidance information. She did not, however, ask any question about his

getting around by himself at the school and in Columbus. Even though he had repeatedly told her in various ways that traveling by himself was his real problem, she seemed unable to grasp the significance of this problem.

The following is a copy of the letter which the worker received from the State School for the Blind:

> "Your letter regarding Mr. Barron interests me very much. He attended our school from February 1st, 1923 to June 9, 1939. His reason for leaving was his graduation. Joe is a very excellent drummer and fulfilled several engagements around the city while he was in school. I am somewhat surprised that he has shown some of the characteristics mentioned in your letter of October 7th. We always found him to be very cooperative and he was always anxious to perform any task that was required of him. He seemed somewhat shy and retiring and was somewhat easily discouraged. My conjecture is that going to a city the size of Cleveland, after having lived in a smaller place with which he was more or less familiar, has somewhat frightened the young man, and he is extremely hesitant about going out into new situations. You can readily realize that a sightless person has much fear of a new situation to overcome. It would seem that you have made every effort to help him. If I may suggest, however, I would advise that you take him to the place where he is to try out. This would break the ice, so to speak, and help him to see that he can get around in a strange situation. I believe that the longer he sits at home and does nothing the more difficult it will be for him to engage in any type of work which will prove wholly or partially self supporting. He knows some of the people who are at Grasselli House, and if he could be taken there, I believe that would be helpful to him."

Although the superintendent of the State School for the Blind was able to give some very practical suggestions the worker was not able to carry them through. In

the interview which followed the arrival of this letter she continued to press him to go to CBS. Here he openly rebelled and said he believed there was something wrong there and that he was afraid he would be made to stay in the sheltered workshop. Evidently Mr. B. had at some time said that he had been kept from traveling alone by his landlady, since here the worker advised him that since his landlady had interfered with his learning to go about by himself, he ought to move. He at first rebelled, then said he would see what he could do about it. Here the worker revealed her lack of understanding of the security provided a blind person through living in the same house over a long period. Through the use of his hands, knees and head the blind person learns the location of every room and piece of furniture. To get a feeling of comfort and freedom of movement in a house full of furniture takes time.

In the final interview Mr. B. expressed more open hostility toward the worker than formerly. None of the worker's plans for employment had materialized. Mr. B. continued to try to find employment for himself as a trap drummer. He still would not or actually could not give names and addresses where he had worked as a musician. She had still not understood nor made any effort to find out the practical difficulties of a blind musician playing in a night club. She expected him to get himself places and never followed the suggestion of the superintendent of the State School for the Blind of taking him or arranging for

a guide to take him to the CBS or any other place of employment. Even though he indicated many times that his problem was fear of traveling alone, she never came to grips with this problem practically. She did not encourage him from a budgetary point of view by including an additional allowance for food, clothing, carfare and guide service, items which are allowed in the budget for a person who is even partially employed. She did not help him get a guide, and persisted in urging him to accept employment in which he had no interest and for which he had no personal qualifications. Besides, there were no opportunities for such employment available in the community. All in all, the worker probably increased his feelings of rejection by sighted people.

The case was transferred to the writer at this point. In preparation for the first visit the writer sent Mr. B. a note in Braille to notify him that he was to have a new worker and when he should expect a visit. Mr. B. could read this note himself rather than call upon his landlady to read the message from the worker, thus giving him an instant of independence from her.

> The writer began the interview by asking Mr. B. if he had received his note. Mr. B. responded that he had and was glad that he had received it in Braille. He was happy that "one of his kind" was visiting him, meaning another blind person. He said he thought the worker would understand him. He did not like the former worker as he felt she did not understand him. The writer replied that sighted people meant to be helpful but they did not always understand how. He told the

writer that he was new in Cleveland and it was hard for him coming from a small city to get used to Cleveland. The writer agreed with him that it was hard. Mr. B. said that the former worker expected him to go all over town by himself. Maybe he could with a guide dog. The writer replied that Mr. B. could not go all over town by himself, but he could go some places.

The writer inquired whether he had had any work lately as a drummer and learned that the last work he had was several months ago, but he expected to get some work with "some sighted fellows." He complained about them saying that they had defense jobs, making music only secondary. The writer asked why he didn't earn money in music in addition to another job, like those "sighted fellows." Mr. B. said that he felt if those fellows would take their music seriously they could get steady work.

A curtain of silence fell between them. In order to break it, the writer asked Mr. B. if he had any girl friends and Mr. B. replied that he had. The writer then asked if he danced and Mr. B. replied not the jitterbug. The writer said that he liked to dance but that he didn't know the jitterbug either. He couldn't get any of the sedate girls he knew to teach him. Mr. B. said that if the writer would come around sometime when the landlady was home, she would teach it to him. The writer replied that he would have to do that sometime. Mr. B. asked if the writer drank beer and brought him a bottle.

The writer asked if he expected a job as a drummer soon. Mr. B. answered that he expected one this coming Saturday night and that he would like to have the writer come. Then Mr. B. asked if the writer had any color prejudice. The writer responded that when he was a youngster he ate baked beans out of the same pot with a colored boy and the beans tasted the same to him as those that came out of his own mother's pot. Mr. B. laughed and seemed quite pleased at this response. He repeatedly told the writer that he was certainly glad he had come. He said, "You know, Weiss, that blind people need pull to get anywhere." The writer replied heartily that

blind people did need someone to intercede for them to get work, but that was why they had Mr. Henry. Mr. Henry had placed more blind people in private industry proportionately than any other person in the field for the blind. Mr. B. said that he was afraid to go to him, as he had heard "they keep you there." The writer asked if he would mind telling him who had told him that "cock and bull" story. Mr. B. said that it was a fellow by the name of Paul Hancock. The writer replied that Mr. B. must not believe everything he heard. It was to Mr. Henry's advantage to get work for him, as that was what he got paid for. The more people he placed the more it was to his credit.

The writer then announced that the next Thursday morning he would come with a cane. He would leave his dog at home, and the two of them would go for a walk. When asked if he would go, Mr. B. agreed. During the first part of the contact the writer felt that Mr. B. sounded cocky, self-assured. He spoke in a tone of voice that indicated he felt he had all the answers, but at the close of the contact he sounded much more reflective.

In this first interview there was a quick identification with the writer because he was also blind. This identification had been prepared for through the Braille note. A blind person who feels rejected, confused or insecure in a world of seeing people will often try to ally himself with other blind people merely on the basis of their having a similar disability, even though educationally, culturally, and socially, the differences are apparent and extensive. He immediately expressed hostility toward the former worker. There is an underlying hostility of many blind people toward sighted people because they feel they are being deprived of normal living by the sighted. Mr. B. verbalized his feeling in the very beginning that now his

problems would be understood, appreciated and perhaps shared. He immediately stated his problem to the writer that he had not been able to get around in Cleveland. The writer recognized this problem by stating that it was hard. He pointed out to Mr. B. that since the sighted musicians were having difficulty getting enough work in music and therefore in addition were working at something else in the daytime, that perhaps Mr. B. could do the same. In this way he tried to bring to Mr. B.'s attention the reality of music as a regular source of livelihood without threatening him with giving up music as a source of pleasure, as well as a means of earning a living. Mr. B. was not yet ready to accept even this limiting of his choice of career, as indicated by his criticism of the sighted musicians, who, he felt, could if they wanted to make a success of their music.

Then the writer showed Mr. B. that he was interested in the various aspects of his personality by asking about his girl friends and about dancing, both of which have a direct connection with rhythm and dance music. At this point, however, the writer made his interview too personal and ran the risk of establishing too close a relationship. The writer's comment that a curtain of silence fell between them just prior to these personal comments indicates that he had some strong feeling about the occurrence of silence in client-worker interviews. In working with blind people, a worker creates a barrier between himself and the client whenever he permits silence to continue for any length of

time, because the blind person depends upon his ears in order to keep in contact with others.

When Mr. B. expressed his fear about Mr. Henry and the CBS, the writer met the problem directly, straight from the shoulder and logically. The writer could have drawn Mr. B. out further regarding his feelings about Mr. Henry and CBS, but instead he got down to the real problem of learning to get around. He offered to come for Mr. B. with a cane and one for himself, and to teach him to walk with a cane. Being the cooperative person they found him to be at the State School for the Blind, he accepted the offer. The writer here was following the suggestion of the superintendent of the State School for the Blind in helping Mr. B. to overcome his fear through action. He was actually going to teach him to use a cane.

The next day the writer talked with Mr. Henry who said that he would be able to try Mr. B. out on a job stringing tags, and if he proved to have tactual skill, he would offer him a job in the broom factory where men were earning up to thirty or forty dollars per week. He did not think there would be any openings yet in private industry for Mr. B. He thought he would be better off working at the CBS from a long time point of view, since after the war Mr. B. would probably lose out in private industry.

> When the writer arrived for his appointment about 9:30 A.M. Mr. B. had not eaten his breakfast. The writer handed him his cane, and Mr. B. in a tone of incredulity, said, "Weiss brought me a cane." He wanted to go out immediately without eating his breakfast,

but the writer told him he would need a lot of food under his belt this morning. After he had eaten his breakfast, they started out of the house. Mr. B.'s house was in back of another one, and it was necessary to travel through an alley to the gate in order to get out on to the street. Mr. B. went ahead of the writer without waiting for him. He put on a display of confidence and self assurance in his hustle from the door to the gate. Then the writer took him by the arm as they walked up 37th street. He hustled along in a manner that seemed a little bit wreckless, so the writer held him back a little. When the writer heard their approaching an obstacle on Mr. B.'s side, he hit it with his cane to indicate that Mr. B. had better be a little careful.

As they walked along the writer called his attention to the different breaks in the sidewalks, such as a driveway whose pavement slopes toward the street, broken pavement, curbstones, etc. When they reached Central Avenue Mr. B. said, "Now let me hold your arm." The writer headed toward CBS, but did not say that that was his intention at first, because he was not any too sure that they would get there, and since Mr. B. had some fear about the place, the writer in addition did not want to arouse it while they were trying to walk. When they got to a busy corner, the writer told him not to be afraid to call out for help. They heard someone walking nearby, and the writer pointed out that he could tell it was a woman by the sound of her heels. He asked her if she would help them across the street, and she did. He pointed out that people are always ready to help one out when they are asked to do so. While strolling along they walked off the pavement. The writer remarked that they were walking like a couple of blind men. Mr. B. laughed. The writer pointed out the different stores that they passed which could be identified by their odors and sounds, such as coffee being ground, shoes being repaired, glasses clinking on a soda fountain. He called Mr. B.'s attention to the various kinds of vehicles such as a bus, truck and passenger car. When they reached 55th Street, the writer asked if he would mind going to the CBS. Mr. B. consented, so they went in

to see Mr. Henry.

Mr. Henry explained to Mr. B. how to use the cane and took him by the arm to demonstrate. This gave Mr. Henry the opportunity to estimate the height and build of Mr. B., for Mr. Henry is also blind. Then Mr. Henry explained the employment policies of the CBS and pointed out the opportunities and advantages of the sheltered workshop over private industry. He gave Mr. B. a good inspirational talk of how he could through a little effort become self supporting. He cleverly led Mr. B. to agree that perhaps it would be wiser from a long time point of view to work in the CBS. The writer told Mr. B. to feel free to say anything he felt, that Mr. Henry could take criticism. He asked Mr. Henry how much they earned in the shop. When Mr. Henry seemed reluctant to state definitely, the writer urged him at least to give Mr. B. a general idea, so Mr. Henry obliged. Mr. Henry assured Mr. B. of giving him his full cooperation.

At the end of the conference the writer asked Mr. B. whether he felt equal to going home alone. When Mr. B. did not reply the writer told him that it took courage to admit that one was afraid. He said that he would rather have the writer accompany him home. So they walked back down Central Avenue to his home. On the way Mr. B. ran into an obstacle. Laughingly, he said that he almost knocked his teeth out. The writer retorted that a blind man has to learn to use his cane rather than his nose. Then the writer came near hitting a metal pole himself, and remarked that it was wonderful how these poles stepped in front of you without any warning. That amused Mr. B. The writer found the gate of Mr. B.'s residence and left him there. Mr. B. promised to go to CBS the next day.

From the house to Central Avenue Mr. B. put on a display of bravado. The writer sensed what this really was: an attempt to conquer his fear and to cover it up with a veneer of courage. The writer accepted him unconditionally; that is, he allowed Mr. B. to go at his own pace and

met his emotional needs step by step. He gave Mr. B. a lesson in caution through striking the object with his cane. A sudden sound is a good way to bring a blind man to attention and make him alert to danger. The writer pointed out to him how to use his feet, his ears and sense of smell as media for identifying the factors necessary for him to know in order to orient himself adequately while traveling with a cane. Through this concrete assistance in learning to walk the writer helped to educate Mr. B. in the use of his other senses in the place of his eyes. Through his ability to laugh at himself and the discomfiting situations that arose because of the disability, the writer was able to relieve the tension and fear in Mr. B.

Because they arrived at 55th Street without a mishap, Mr. B. was ready to go the remaining short distance to CBS. He was also following his pattern of following suggestions, a quality that he demonstrated at the State School for the Blind. Mr. Henry further showed Mr. B. how to use the cane; at the same time he had a chance to feel his arm and shoulder and thus estimate his height and build. The writer, understanding Mr. B.'s underlying fear, encouraged him to speak up to Mr. Henry. He thereby warded off any hostile reactions from Mr. Henry through telling Mr. B. that Mr. Henry could take criticism. On leaving the CBS, he also helped Mr. B. admit and express his fear. This helped Mr. B. face the fact that his fear of traveling was his real problem.

The writer visited a few days later and found Mr. B. a frightened person. He stated that he was afraid to travel alone or with another blind person for fear of hurting himself. The writer preached to him a little about the need of a blind person to be as independent as possible. However, he recognized that a blind person could not be completely independent; for he would always need someone to help him in some areas. Mr. B. was able to admit and express his fear of traveling with another blind man, because of his fear of running into obstacles. The writer asked if he would go to the CBS if a guide could be secured to go with him. Mr. B. said that he would go. They then figured out a workingman's budget including an item of $10.00 a month for guide service and five dollars for carfare.

Through the high school that was nearby the writer was able to arrange for a girl to take Mr. B. to the CBS. When Mr. B. heard of this arrangement he was very eager and appreciative. The writer explained to the girl how to walk with a blind man. He recommended that she let Mr. B. hold her by the arm so that he could follow her every step. He told her that she need not notify Mr. B. every time she came to a step or a curb because Mr. B. would know of it through the movement of her body up or down. He told her where she could get in touch with him of she should run into any difficulty with Mr. B.

Mr. B. went to CBS with a guide for three days, after which he began traveling by himself with a cane. He remained only about two weeks stringing tags at the CBS and was then placed by Mr. Henry in private industry on a simple assembly job.

It seemed that Mr. B. had a simple fear common to all blind people to a greater or lesser extent about new places, new situations and new people. Because they cannot see, they find it hard to orient themselves through hearing rapidly enough to encounter the emotional, mental and environmental needs of the moment in comparison to those who

can see and hear. The blind who are aggressive and overtly hostile, and those who possess a strong need for self punishment find it easier to adjust to new places, situations and people. But those who are passive, retiring, shy, and easily discouraged find it more difficult to make the adjustment. Therefore, they need specialized help in orientation in varying degrees.

If the first worker had offered to take Mr. B. to CBS he might have gone with her. This would have helped him overcome his fear and feeling of strangeness with regard to the agency. If she had had special knowledge of how to help a blind person to get used to walking by himself along a sidewalk he might have been able to overcome his fear of walking alone in a big city, for apparently he had been traveling somewhat alone in the smaller communities, and certainly, on the grounds and in and out of the many buildings of the State School for the Blind. On the other hand, being unable to do this, she might have tried to find a person with this special knowledge who could have helped Mr. B. She also could have included $10.00 a month for guide service in Mr. B.'s budget.

The worker needed to arm herself in advance with the history of the struggle in educating and finding employment for the blind. If she had been aware of the environmental limitations of employment for the blind, she might not have pressed him so hard to accept work that did not exist. If she had been aware of the limited employability

of most of the blind people, she would have felt herself less compelled to persuade Mr. B. to accept work in which he would have found no satisfaction and little pay. The Superintendent of the State School for the Blind indicated in his letter to the worker that he had accepted the likelihood of partial employment for Mr. B. It was possible to place Mr. B. in private industry only because of the manpower shortage because of the war situation. It is likely that he will be one of the first discharged after the war because he is blind, colored, and not unusually skillful in production.

The writer endangered the good he did through his haste in helping Mr. B. orient himself all in one week. He recognized Mr. B.'s problem as fear of traveling in a big strange city. He accepted the limitations of Mr. B.'s inability to travel everywhere with a cane by himself. For a moment the writer yielded to the human impulse to preach when frustrated. He recognized Mr. B.'s feeling of security in his ability to play the drums. He therefore did not ask him to give up entirely the playing of trap drums, but suggested it as an avocation. He made certain first through an interview with Mr. Henry with regard to opportunities for employment before he attempted to direct Mr. B.'s attention to an occupation other than music. He used Braille for what it was for Mr. B., a means of communication. He used the policies of the agency to include a special allowance for guide service in their financial planning. He recognized

Mr. B.'s inherent timidity with regard to people; and therefore, made the arrangements for a guide. He interpreted Mr. B. to the guide and also to Mr. Henry and focussed the interpretation on the point at which each was to serve.

Group III

Mr. Ewing represents the group of three clients for whom the problem was to find the adequate community resource in order to put to use whatever skill they might have. Mr. Lezar was a person who never had much manual skill even when he could see, nor did he have great ambition to succeed materially. Therefore, he was satisfied to work in a sheltered workshop where he was able to earn only one dollar a day. Mr. Luckman, on the other hand, who also had a very low degree of manual dexterity, felt he had to earn a good income because he had a wife and four children to support. However, the writer had not been able to help him find adequate employment through the known community resources such as the U.S.E.S. and the State Vocational Rehabilitation services for the Blind. While these agencies had endeavored to help him find employment and while he had been willing to give up the playing of the accordion on the streets as a means of earning a living, nevertheless, Mr. Luckman was not placed because of his lack of manual capability as well as his lack of educational and intellectual endowments. The problem for the writer and Mr. Luckman was to find a job simple enough for a

laboring type of man to do such as shoveling coal, for Mr. Luckman had the brawn for it.

The writer chose Mr. Ewing for more extensive exposition because this case demonstrates more clearly how a community service can be misused and how a person can be helped through the appropriate use of a community resource.

> Mr. E. was a young colored man, 32 years old, who was totally blind. He was born in Ohio of a white father and colored mother. He was deprived of parents at an early age: his father deserted and his mother died. He was left in the care of a maternal aunt who was very solicitous of him.
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> He received a grammar school, high school and university education in Ohio. He received a B. S. degree in business administration. After coming to Cleveland, he took six hours of graduate training toward a master's degree. He had worked his way through college and had given up a great deal to secure an education. He was a good student and studied continually instead of making friends and entering into the social life of the campus.
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> His work history began immediately upon his arrival in Cleveland in 1933. He worked for a short period as a hotel clerk, then as a visitor for a social agency. After a general layoff of visitors, he was hired as a clerk and stenographer in the same agency. This job came as a result of a very high grade on a civil service examination. He remained at this position until 1937 when he became blind and had to be hospitalized. During this period of hospitalization, he received a Federal civil service appointment as a mail carrier, which he obviously could not accept. He had already rejected a civil service appointment as typist in Washington in order to continue his graduate work. He was remembered by his supervisor at the social agency as a responsible conscientious worker, who was accepted by both white and colored clients. He was good in his work as a visitor and later as a typist and clerk.

While in the hospital he learned that his visual impairment was due to congenital syphilis. He faithfully followed through on the prescribed regimen of treatment until he was discharged. The first we learned about his reactions to his handicap was when he was in the hospital when the physician reported that he was worried about being a burden. The physician believed that unless he could learn a trade in order to become self supporting and feel useful he might take his life.

Upon discharge from the hospital he returned to live at the same place where he resided before he became ill. He received a monthly grant from the CRB and he was referred to CBS for help in adjusting to his new situation. The workers of CBS offered him an opportunity to go to their summer camp where the newly blinded people were taught to make the necessary adjustments to everyday living but he refused to go. They arranged for him to learn Braille and use a talking book[1] which he accepted and enjoyed very much. Because of his interest in Braille at that time he inquired about opportunities to teach it under the WPA education program. He was referred from one person to another, and as far as could be ascertained from the records, he was not given much assistance in obtaining such a position. However, it is doubtful whether he was equipped to teach Braille, for he had only known it about a month. It was merely something concrete that he thought he could do to become useful. He then expressed an interest in employment as a typist. This interest was never followed through. Instead Mr. E. was offered an opportunity to work in the broom or tag shop at the CBS. Despite insistent persuasion he refused this offer because the work was not commensurate, in his opinion, with his educational and vocational experience. He also refused to take part in the recreational activities of CBS because he felt that no one there would be of his social and cultural level.

The visitors at the CRB supported the treatment given him by the workers of CBS. This attitude was characterized by a quotation from the record: "Mr. E. still manifests no

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1 A talking book is a phonograph which plays records of someone reading.

interests in anything aside from what he was trained to do prior to his blindness. He said that he had continued to maintain his speed in typing and saw no reason why he should not be given employment in this field. Visitor went into detail with Mr. E. regarding the need for his proving his ability to adjust to his handicap." The implication seemed to be that his refusal to attend the recreational activities of CBS and to accept their plan of stringing tags as a means of occupying himself and earning a little money, besides, meant that he was not accepting his handicap.

While both agencies were trying to persuade him to accept their ideas of satisfactory vocational adjustment, he applied to the American Foundation for the Blind for help, and was offered a scholarship in education at the School for the Colored Blind of West Virginia. He refused this opportunity because he did not want to enter a school for the colored. After that he applied for assistance in securing employment to the Bureau of Services for the Blind, Washington, D. C.

On one occasion, when the visitor called at his home, she was surprised to find the director of CBS and Mr. C. from the Bureau of Services for the Blind there. The following quotation illustrates the climax in the kind of treatment given Mr. E. The CBS record states: "Mr. C. himself is a blind person of about fifty years of age, who told Mr. E. very frankly that he had never been a dependent since he had lost his sight twenty-four years ago. He saw no reason why people with a reasonable amount of intelligence and background should be dependent if this was the only handicap they had. He was frank and blunt in his remarks to Mr. E. He told Mr. E. that he, Mr. E., was a parasite and had made no effort to help himself since he had developed this condition. During this entire interview Mr. E. sat with his arms folded, almost motionless. Mr. E. concluded that Mr. C. would not consider employing him, but Mr. E. still felt that he had a great deal of ability and that someone would some day be more considerate."

Throughout these contacts the landlady voiced her opinions about the suggestions made regarding his adjustment. On one occasion she became defiant, telling the worker that she

> should protect Mr. E. from people who suggested work "beneath his standards." She also remarked that the recreational groups at CBS were composed of persons inferior socially and morally.

From the reading of the record it seemed to the writer that the former workers exerted too much pressure upon Mr. E. to follow a pattern of life that they thought to be socially desirable, and therefore, better for him, without taking into consideration the social and psychological problems that he had as a result of his early familial relationship. Nor did they evaluate the solutions he had found before he had lost his vision. He probably felt all his life socially rejected since his father deserted and his mother died when he was a small child. The situation was further complicated by the fact that his father was white and his mother colored. Before he had lost his sight he never mixed much socially. While in college he preferred to study, read and work rather than enter into social activities. He learned early to compensate through achievement for any losses he had felt. His handicap simply made it easier for him to become more withdrawn. It also made it easier for him to accept a status of dependency, which in the home of the landlady he found comfortable, materially and emotionally. Blind assistance helped to make this financially possible.

Because of Mr. E.'s reluctance to accept their plans for his rehabilitation, the workers became frustrated, and blamed the landlady for preventing Mr. E. from accepting

their recommendations. The limitations of their agencies and the lack of opportunities in the community for white collared and professional blind people, especially Negroes, added further to their feelings of frustration.

> The writer in his first interview with Mr. E. tried to build up a friendly relationship by telling him of some of his own problems due to blindness and then the problems of all blind persons in general. He interspersed general conversation with occasional direct questions. When the writer inquired as to his general health, Mr. E. replied that he was never sick. When the subject of church-going and what people do on Sundays was tapped, Mr. E. said that he attended the Christian Science Church and that a practitioner attended him. The writer thought that his voice sounded "lonesome," so he inquired what he did all day. Mr. E. responded that he read all day and listened to the radio, but people in a big city did not come in and visit as they did in small towns, and he missed that. He would like to talk to people, and besides, he would like to work. The writer then inquired what kind of work Mr. E. was interested in. Mr. E. said that he preferred typing, and that he practiced on a typewriter every day. When the writer asked if he had ever been in touch with CBS, Mr. E. said that they offered him only a job stringing tags, but he was interested not merely in work per se, but in what it represented culturally. The writer said that it would be a good idea to go to CBS, but that he would not have to stay unless he chose to. He explained to Mr. E. that the placement agent liked to test the work habits of a person for two weeks in the sheltered workshop before placing him in regular employment. Mr. E. replied that he did not want to try anything that he was not sure of succeeding in.
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> When Mr. E. was asked how he felt about his situation in general, he replied that he was contented and had much to be thankful for, had a fine place to live, and could have been crippled and forced to spend the rest of his life in a wheelchair. The writer did not mention his disease, but continued general

> conversation, asking about the girl friends. Mr. E. said that he had to quit them because that required money. Did he get out of the house enough? Yes, he said, because the landlady was ready to take him anywhere at any time but he did not like to be conspicuous. The writer endeavored to draw him out on this point, but Mr. E. was not able to elucidate what he meant, except to say that he did not like people to stare at him. As the writer was leaving he agreed to explore the possibilities of work for Mr. E.

In this interview Mr. E. indicated that he depended upon his landlady to get around, that he felt a lack of acceptance by sighted people, and that he was not interested in work per se, but only if it was commensurate with his cultural and intellectual level. He expressed fear of failure. He said that he was lonely and told of his interest in a religion which withdraws a person from the external and material factors of life. He expressed no interest in girls.

The writer's telling Mr. E. of some of his own experiences was good up to a point since they bore a relation to Mr. E.'s problems. In doing this, however, the writer might have established too close an identification with Mr. E. Although Mr. E. showed real interest, he nevertheless probably felt rather uncomfortable, for the writer was apparently succeeding and Mr. E. was not. Besides, if he could not accept the writer's solutions to similar problems, he might have been fearful that the writer would feel that Mr. E. was rejecting him personally.

During this interview the writer touched on various subjects. Because of his awareness of Mr. E.'s injured ego, he did not press his exploration in those areas

in which Mr. E. revealed resistance. When Mr. E. responded, that was the path to take; if he did not, some other interest might be located. While he mentioned CBS, the only agency in the community with specialized services to the blind, he helped Mr. E. realize that he did not have to accept the services of that agency. Mr. E. was encouraged to express his preferences with regard to employment. This approach was in reverse to that used by the previous workers. Throughout this interview the writer was encouraging Mr. E. to express his own ideas and feelings.

Since typing was one of the skills in which Mr. E. had achieved success when he could see, and since he expressed confidence in his ability to perform adequately as a typist even though he was now blind, it was an obvious line of direction to be followed by both the worker and Mr. E., for blind people can type successfully through the touch system. The writer believed that a job as typist should be secured for him, even if only on a part-time basis, in order to gain for him some feeling of adequacy in the outside world.

Early in the contact with the writer Mr. E. revealed an interest in dictaphone work as an acceptable means of gainful occupation. He felt that such a job would bear some relation to his education and previous experience. The CBS, the obvious community resource to go to for help with Mr. E., had not assisted him in the direction he had desired. The writer, therefore, made contact with the

Dictaphone Company to find out whether they would accept him as a student for a refresher course.

It might have been better to recommend that Mr. E. make the initial contact with the Dictaphone Company himself. The writer could have prepared him for possible disappointment in stating that they would explore other possibilities in case this resource did not materialize. The writer, however, decided to defer a little his growth toward independence rather than to run the risk of his suffering another outright rejection which might have been one too many. The writer, therefore, talked with the supervisor of education at the Dictaphone School about Mr. E., his abilities and his handicaps. She advised a two weeks refresher course.

Then the writer conferred with Mr. Henry, the placement agent at CBS, with regard to whether he would take the responsibility of finding employment for Mr. E. as dictaphone-typist. Mr. Henry agreed to undertake this responsibility provided Mr. E. would bring him a written statement from the Dictaphone School indicating that he qualified on a par with sighted workers as a dictaphone-typist. Mr. Henry believed that he could unearth a position for Mr. E. at this time as there was a shortage of dictaphone-typists in the community. Mr. Henry and the writer agreed that Mr. E. had three handicaps for such a position: he was blind, he was colored and he was a man. The fact that he was a man was a definite handicap since

employers prefer girls for this type of work. Mr. Henry and the writer concluded that Mr. E. would fit best in civil service or in a social welfare agency.

In the next interview the writer explained to Mr. E. theopportunity for training at the Dictaphone School and the offer of placement service by Mr. Henry upon the successful completion of this training. Mr. E. readily accepted the opportunity. The writer then brought up the matter of guide service and the payment of tuition for the course. The writer asked Mr. E. whether he could get his landlady to guide him, but he thought she would be too busy. The writer then offered to get in touch with CBS to see whether they could provide a guide. Mr. E. said that he preferred making his own contacts. The writer suggested that Mr. E. let him know if CBS were unable to assist him and he would then see what he could do. Mr. E. went ahead and made arrangements with his landlady, and asked that an allowance for guide service be included in his budget, the possibility of which he had previously been told by the writer. An allowance for tuition for the dictaphone course was also included in the budget.

Although he attended the Dictaphone School irregularly because his landlady, who guided him, had other things to do, he completed the requirements of the course, and upon the writer's suggestion secured a letter of recommendation from the school. Thus he was able to prove that he could do typing and dictaphone work and he was able to

prove it in an environment of sighted people. He was able to meet the standards required of sighted students and also proved that he could accept supervision from a sighted person.

Upon receiving the report from the school Mr. Henry endeavored to find employment for Mr. E. Even though agencies were in urgent need of dictaphone-typists they would not employ him, first, because he was colored; second, because he was blind and, therefore, could not do other things around the office; and third, because he was a man and they feared he might not fit into an office amidst girls. Consequently, since he had formerly been a visitor, typist and clerk in a public relief agency and was therefore already familiar with the kind of material that went into the records, he was offered an opportunity to get further experience at the CRB. It was planned with the chief stenographer that he be given dictation from untrained visitors, not from students or case workers. There was still the risk, however, of his being disturbed by working in the agency from which he had so recently received assistance. There was a danger of his over-identifying with the clients whose records he would be typing and there was a likelihood of his running across medical information and therefore concluding that other typists in the office would know of his medical report.

To warrant the risks involved the writer felt that there would be enough positives in this experience at CRB,

such as his building up work tolerance, the gaining of additional efficiency in office routine, and the proving of his ability to compete with sighted workers in the successful, efficient production of work. As a blind man, he would need all the practical evidence that could be gathered to sell his services to a prospective employer. Mr. E. Was, therefore, offered an opportunity to work two days a week at the CRB on a voluntary basis until regular employment could be found. The writer asked him if he would accept this arrangement, which he did. The writer then suggested that this would be a good opportunity for him to learn to travel alone with a cane. He offered his assistance, but Mr. E. stated that he could manage it alone. Having some question about Mr. E.'s ability to succeed, however, since he had not travelled alone during the five years since the onset of his blindness, the writer visited the following day and learned from the landlady that Mr. E. had been out for about an hour learning to travel by himself. Mr. E. had apparently gained such a degree of confidence in himself through succeeding and proving his ability to type that he was able to carry this self-assurance over into the area of learning to travel by himself.

Mr. E. reported for work on the appointed day. The writer had interpreted to the chief stenographer beforehand the kind of help Mr. E. would probably need. He explained to her that there would probably be as much danger in offering him too much help as in offering not enough.

Therefore, he advised that Mr. E. would indicate in various ways when he was in need of help. For example, he would ask for it, or he would sit before his machine hoping someone would offer him help. The writer pointed out ways, in addition, in which Mr. E. could maintain a degree of independence: how he could keep track of his records through putting the name and number in Braille on a piece of paper and pasting it or stapling it on the folder. Also, he could put a pencil point hole at the side of the page at the line where he had stopped typing in order that he could feel where he should begin the next time. While in the beginning he would need some extra help, the longer he worked, the more familiar he became with the records, the less help he would require. The time would soon come when the only aid he would need would be to ask occasionally where he had left off typing when for some reason beyond his control his attention would be distracted.

When Mr. E. arrived at the office, the writer was on hand to help him orient himself in the office, since the greater the independence he could achieve on the job from the other workers, the less would be his feeling of anxiety, and the greater the effectiveness of his work. The same information that was given to the stenographer about identifying the records was given to Mr. E. Because of his discomfiture of writing Braille in the presence of the stenographer who was needed to tell him the name and number on the record, the writer wrote the first one for him. Mr. E.

noticed that the chief stenographer made no comment about the writer's action and that she apparently took it as a matter of course, and he was thereby made comfortable to carry on without further help. The writer then showed him how to press a little hole into the paper at the end of the line where he stopped typing in order that he might know when he picked the record up again at what line he had left off. He could detect this by sliding his finger down the side of the sheet. He was encouraged not to be afraid to ask for help when he needed it, as there would be times when his attention would be distracted and he would have to ask someone to tell him the last word he had written.

Then the writer proceeded to help him learn to get to the men's rest room. Not to know how to get to the men's room can prove to be an insurmountable obstacle for a passive blind person to accept employment among women. There are not many women who would be mature enough to outface curious questioning onlookers who at first would not realize that she was helping a blind man to the entrance, nor could the blind man be expected to have enough courage to ask a woman to direct him thither. Yet he could not be expected to sit eight hours a day without going to the men's room. Even if a woman did ask him if he would care to go "outside," he would probably refuse from embarrassment. The writer explained to Mr. E. that to the right of where he sat at his typewriter was a wall; the writer led him over to touch it. He could feel his way along this wall until he came to a

clothes tree at the end of it on which he could hang his coat and hat when he came to work in the morning. At the right of the clothes tree he could hear typewriters and people talking in the bookkeeping department, and as each person spoke the writer identified him by name for Mr. E. Then the writer told him to turn to the left of the clothes tree down the small corridor. To his right he could hear a typewriter and the voice of the record clerk. He could feel metal cabinets, a desk, and finally a cement wall. When he came to the end of this wall he could hear or feel a water cooler on the right side. Just beyond the cooler he would find the door which would lead toward the men's room. The writer conducted him through this routine several times and then asked him to try it alone. He found it by himself very easily as he had a good sense of direction and location, as well as auditory intelligence. He could interpret what he heard into concrete things and identified people readily through the sound of their voices.

Through the writer's awareness of Mr. E.'s need to orient and adjust himself to the job through the senses of touch and hearing he was able to help Mr. E. use his skills as a dictaphone operator in a normal environment. Mr. E. performed satisfactorily in comparison with the sighted workers in this office. While he was working on a voluntary basis, efforts were made to find him employment through U.S.E.S., the placement service of CBS, the Urban League and other sources without success. After about a month he

refused to continue to work on a voluntary basis. As a result he was placed on the regular payroll. He had reached the point of self assurance where he could ask for remuneration commensurate with his service. About three months later, however, he notified the chief stenographer that he was leaving. He informed the writer in an interview at home that he had become so tense that he could not eat or sleep, and thought only about his work day and night. He maintained that he simply could not continue working. Everybody had been helpful to him and he had not made too many mistakes. He simply got to the point where he was too afraid of making a lot of errors and spoiling the records. The writer asked him whether the girls always helped him when he needed it. He replied that they were always willing and ready to help but that he just did not like to ask them to stop their work in order to help him; and he would sit quite awhile idle before asking for any assistance. The writer pointed out to him that he seemed to have an unusual amount of fear. He replied that his fear was only in connection with his work. The writer recommended a thorough physical examination in order to discover whether there was a physical basis for these feelings. He replied that he felt perfectly well and did not care to go to the doctor. The landlady called out from the kitchen that she too thought he had an unusual amount of fear and that it would be a good thing for him to be examined by the doctor, and she would have her personal physician look at him.

The writer had learned from the chief stenographer that Mr. E. never took time out from his work for rest. He went at such a rapid pace that he transcribed more cylinders than the sighted workers. The writer had heard indirectly that this had aroused some negative feelings on the part of the other stenographers. Being cognizant of this situation, the writer advised him that he need not work so hard on the job, that it was customary for stenographers to take time out to rest, as no one could be expected to pound the typewriter seven and a half hours a day. The writer felt sure that Mr. E. noticed that the other stenographers did take time out to smoke or talk to relieve their tension. There is often a tendency for a handicapped person to try to compensate for his disability by doing more than is expected of him. This is more often true in the early stages of a job when the disabled person does not as yet feel that he has been fully accepted as a person by the other members of the staff.

Even though the writer endeavored to elicit from Mr. E. possible reasons for his fears, Mr. E. maintained that he could not give any. Even though measures were taken to reduce the risks mentioned above by limiting the scope of material he was given to type, some of his tension might still have been caused by over-identification with the clients and fear of his own medical history being discovered by his fellow workers. The writer might have tried further to help Mr. E. express the basis for his fears but he failed

to do this.

Since Mr. E. did not return to work, the writer decided to solicit the cooperation of the landlady, and asked her to come to the office for an interview. The writer remarked that she probably knew Mr. E. better than anyone else and, therefore, he wondered whether she could explain his reactions. She said that he liked the work, that he wanted to work, but she was at a loss to know what the trouble was, as he was not very communicable even with her. She believed, though, that she could get him to do anything she wanted. The writer then asked if she thought she could help him return to work. After she expressed a great deal of hostility about the fact that white people thought they were superior just because of their color and that Mr. E. was underpaid for his ability and work, she said that she would see what she could do. She said that it was like a miracle that the writer of all the people who had tried to help him, was the only one who had been able to get him to do anything. The writer asked if she could explain this. She answered that she believed it was due to the fact that Mr. E. liked the writer, and that she too liked him although she blamed him for the low salary Mr. E. had been paid. The outcome was that he never returned to the job at CRB. He asked to be reinstated on public assistance. This request was complied with. A month later, however, he notified the writer that he would no longer be in need of financial assistance, as he had found employment.

The former workers were not able to help Mr. E. in the direction in which he wanted help and persisted in referring him to CBS, the one agency in the community that specialized in assisting blind people. They seemed to focus their attention on fitting the client into the services of the one obvious resource rather than finding another resource that could adequately meet the needs of the client. In using this approach they treated Mr. E. as a person who belonged to a class called "blind" rather than as a person with individual needs and preferences, who happened to be blind.

The writer, on the other hand, allowed Mr. E. to point the way in which he wanted to be helped. Then he went about trying to find the resource in the community that would meet Mr. E.'s particular need. In helping Mr. E. get the refresher course at the Dictaphone Company the writer was helping him bridge the emotional gulf between the past when he could see and the present when he was blind. Typing was one of the things he had done well as a sighted person and could do equally well as a blind person. The writer through his knowledge of how to utilize the sense of touch and hearing was able to help Mr. E. to adapt himself to the office routine. In addition he prepared the way for him both with the supervisor at the Dictaphone Company and the chief stenographer at the CRB office. Unlike the previous workers, he accepted the fact of the close relationship between the landlady and Mr. E. and sought her cooperation.

The writer's nonjudgmental attitude throughout the contact circumvented Mr. E.'s pattern of withdrawing from any kind of unpleasantness or threats. Being aware of Mr. E.'s passiveness and his sensitiveness to rejection, the writer in many instances provided the initiative in exploring new possibilities, in preparing the way in new situations, and helping Mr. E. in equipping himself to meet these new experiences.

The writer, moreover, was quite aware of Mr. E.'s fear of losing status, and did not, as the former workers did, suggest that Mr. E. occupy himself just for the sake of being occupied or contributing to his own support. The writer had accepted the principle that in working with a disabled person he should not suggest any occupation that would lower his self esteem, but rather suggest one that would maintain or increase it, as long as the type of occupation was commensurate with the handicapped person's training, education and skill.

This case illustrates how two blind workers, each in his own way, tried to be helpful to a blind client. Mr. Conan, the worker from the Services for the Blind in Washington, an aggressive, pugnacious, and manually skillful man, without training in social case work, found it impossible to identify with Mr. E., a passive and retiring person. As a result of Mr. Conan's approach, Mr. E. apparently withdrew further within himself, as his way of protecting himself from outer unpleasantness. On the other hand, the writer,

noting similarities in experience and education between himself and Mr. E., tended at various points to over-identify with him. Both the writer and Mr. E. had had a university education. Both of them had had work as visitors in social agencies, and the writer had also had experience as a dictaphone-typist, the kind of employment in which Mr. E. was interested. Through this over-identification the writer might have set up standards, which he had himself been able to meet, and thereby might have expected the same of Mr. E. If Mr. E. had been fearful of his ability to attain these standards, there was danger of his withdrawing from the writer and thereby making it more difficult for the writer to be useful to him.

CONCLUSIONS

It seems to the writer that the following conclusions can be drawn with regard to these ten blind people:

All ten clients felt frustrated because of their disability, but each one expressed his feelings of frustration in the area in which he felt the need of expressing himself. For example, Mr. Ewing felt frustrated in the area of employment because he had not been given the opportunity to do as a blind man what he had been able to do as a sighted man--that is, type for a living. Therefore, when the writer helped him overcome this particular frustration he was able to liberate his energies in other areas. For instance, while he had never traveled alone with a cane since he had become blind five years before, just as soon as he had the chance to regain his self confidence through proving his ability to type he was then able to take a cane and travel with it without assistance. Mr. Barron felt that one of his major frustrations was in the direction of his inability to travel by himself. Only after he was liberated from this fear through concrete practical help, could he avail himself of the existing community resources through which he became self supporting.

Blindness in all ten cases made the person more dependent from a practical point of view, since the world is largely arranged for and by those who can see. The problem for all ten of those people, therefore, was to learn

to accept dependency in the areas where sight was necessary and to learn to maintain or develop independence where sight was not an essential. To make an adequate adjustment entailed a process of education in the use of special techniques in meeting the practical difficulties due to the handicap, and also in the cultivation of the kind of attitudes that would enable the blind person to request and accept help when needed, and develop his independent action whenever feasible. To develop this independence some of them needed to learn to use a cane in traveling, for example, and, in addition, needed to learn to feel comfortable in asking for help. While a blind person could learn to get about by himself without the aid of a person, a cane or a guide dog in a familiar environment such as a home, an office or factory, or an immediate neighborhood through the use of his ears, facial perception and by the sense of touch through the balls of his feet, he still would be safer with aid of some kind in traveling in a new environment. In new surroundings he must be more alert and, therefore, would become fatigued much more rapidly. As a consequence his perceptive powers would become less sensitive and thereby the risk of injury either to himself or others would be increased through stumbling over raised and broken pavement blocks, or running into baby carriages, water hydrants or bystanders. The use of some aid such as a cane, guide dog, or person in an unfamiliar environment, helps to prevent fatigue and nervous tension and reduce the risks involved. Even after a blind

person learns to use a cane he still needs help in crossing a busy thoroughfare or in finding the number of a house, for instance. The case worker had to be aware of the areas in which these people needed help because of their disability, and to show his understanding by assisting in that area even when the client did not verbally ask for it. The writer says "did not verbally ask for it," for the client sometimes asked by bodily movement revealing uncertainty or conflict, his facial expression, the sound of his voice or hesitation in his speech. Sometimes his asking was negatively expressed in an endeavor to rationalize away a need to do something because he could not admit his inability to carry through because of lack of vision. The study has shown how Mrs. Allison, for example, could not admit her greatly restricted field of vision, and how she attempted to rationalize herself out of doing things that required sight.

The records of these ten blind clients indicated that frustration inevitably led to feelings of resentment or hostility. All ten clients expressed hostility of one kind or another. The case worker, therefore, needed skill to elicit the expression of these feelings against anybody or anything. At the same time he had to be able to give the client the assurance that no retaliation of any kind would follow such an expression. For example, Mr. Barron stated to the writer that he did not like the former worker whom he criticized for expecting too much of him.

All ten clients indicated a fear of loss of self

respect. Therefore, the worker in such situations needed ever to be on the alert to point out to the client honestly and realistically his strong points. For example, Mr. Luckman, who played the accordion on the streets for a living, expressed resentment that he had not had the opportunity to learn to play the instrument better. He felt that if he had, he would have been able to play for social gatherings and in dining places rather than on the streets. Even though many people had criticized him for this occupation, which was actually a form of begging, the writer made him feel that he accepted Mr. Luckman in spite of his choice of an occupation. The writer showed this by inquiring about how many songs he could play and his method of learning them. Mr. Luckman indicated that he had to expend great effort in learning songs because of his lack of training as well as his handicap. The writer thereby gave him full recognition for his great expenditure of effort and determination.

All ten clients had limited employability in varying degrees. Their employability was limited first because they were blind; second, because they lacked adequate skill or training; third, because the workers were not able to find the resources that could use their varying degrees of capacity; fourth, because not all segments of society were ready to accept the blind people for what they could do rather than for what they could not do; and fifth, because some of them were not ready to accept their own limited employability. The case worker's function was to try to

help these clients find out what they could do best and try to help them find an outlet for the employment of their particular capabilities, even though it sometimes meant that they still needed financial supplementation.

Work with these ten clients indicated the need of special knowledge in helping blind people adapt themselves in a sighted environment. As the writer indicated in helping Mr. Ewing to orient himself in the office, the case worker had to have an awareness of the little practical adjustments that needed to be made to obviate the stresses due to the disability. For example, the writer helped the client to use Braille notations on the records so that he would not have to ask for help in selecting the record he wanted.

Many of these clients found themselves unable to move forward until they were given an opportunity to express and carry through their own individual desires. Many of them were unable to accept the routine referrals to CBS, where one of the first things offered for occupation was the stringing of tags. This and other types of work at CBS seemed to bear little resemblance to the work for which most of these clients had skill, training or experience. Therefore, the case worker had to try to find resources other than CBS to meet the needs of these clients, as illustrated in the work with Mr. Ewing.

Many of these clients indicated in one way or another that they did not accept the Aid to the Blind grant as assisting them primarily because they were in financial need

as well as because they were blind, but rather as a pension to which they were entitled simply because they were blind regardless of their financial status. One client, for example, stated that it was an element of security in his life. For others, it helped to maintain a degree of independence of their family. For others it redressed the balance of the feeling of inequality in the economic struggle in competition with sighted people. Therefore, while the writer had to explain to the clients that public assistance was granted them according to financial need, and not merely on the basis of the handicap itself, he always made certain that the clients were aware of the flexibility and the special considerations which were the constructive aspects of the program. For example, even for the partially employed blind clients, the CRB could include an increased allowance for clothing and food, also for the cost of guide service, carfare, lunches, dry cleaning and laundry.

In dealing with these and other blind clients the writer has often sensed an emotional barrier arising whenever protracted silence happened to occur in an interview. While permitting silence to prevail occasionally may be a good approach when dealing with sighted clients, it is courting a break in the relationship between the worker and a blind client, for while the worker can keep contact with the client through watching his facial expressions, the blind client has no way of keeping in touch with the sighted worker and, therefore, feels at a disadvantage. It, therefore,

requires greater skill on the part of the worker in making comments and putting questions in order to keep the verbal contact with the client, and yet leave the client free to express himself along the line of his own interest.

Since some identification is necessary at least in the beginning to establish a helpful relationship with a client, the blind worker thereby automatically starts out with an element in his favor. As an outcome, since both worker and client have had similar experiences due to their handicap, the differences being mostly in degree, they start out with a basis of mutual understanding. The great danger on the part of the worker in his relationship with a client with a similar disability is that he might identify with the client to such an extent that he might actually share the client's feelings about a situation and thereby not be free to help the client handle it objectively. Or, he might expect the client to have the same feelings which he had in a similar situation, and thereby might create difficulties in the emotions of the client which might otherwise not have occurred. The worker might expect the client to be able to do what the worker has been able to do, or be frustrated by the same experiences that have frustrated the worker, and consequently make the helping process more difficult and uncertain.

In brief, the approach which seemed to be helpful to these clients was the acceptance of their social and physical limitations. Thus, they were able to feel more

comfortable in their particular patterns of living. There were limitations because of the disability itself, because of emotional difficulties from other causes, and their lack of education and training, in addition to the lack of opportunities in the community for jobs they were equipped to do. Another approach that seemed to be helpful was an acceptance, without judgment or criticism of their hostile feelings directed toward the worker as a person and representative of the agency, and toward other persons and agencies in the environment. The relief-giving function of the agency was used in an endeavor to give the clients a measure of security in their struggles to achieve some feeling of equality with, and independence of, other people in their environment. In addition, the budget was used as an incentive to work through additional allowances granted an employed person as far as the policies of the agency would permit. Along with this financial planning for working people, recognition was given to their limited employability. Through this regimen of treatment all ten clients gained some additional satisfaction or comfort and showed some further progress, albeit to greatly varying degrees. While all of the clients profited from the training and skills in generic case work, they were assisted even further through the special knowledge and awareness of the significance of the disability and its many ramifications.

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APPENDIX

Schedule

1. Who are these clients with regard to age, sex, color, education, occupation and social status?

2. What are the problems as the client presents them?

3. Does the writer or worker see the problems differently?

4. How do these clients encounter frustration and anxiety?

5. What is known about the early family relationships that shed light upon the present problems?

6. What steps were taken to help these clients adjust to their difficulties?

7. What were the consequences of these steps?

8. What is the reality factor of blindness in each case?

9. How do they regard private agencies for the blind?